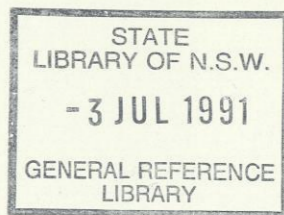


VERTICAL
FILE



1989-90
Employment Injuries
Tasmania

Catalogue Number 6301.6

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Employment Injuries Tasmania 1989-90

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Deputy Commonwealth Statistician
and
Government Statistician of Tasmania

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Hobart
Catalogue number 6301.6

Employment Injuries, 1989-90

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Inquiries

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	Inquiries	Inquiries about these statistics, and other unpublished data, may be made by calling Hobart (002) 20 5836 (Jenny Spencer). For other inquiries, including copies of publications, call the Information Officer on Hobart (002) 20 5800. The Tasmanian Office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics is located on the 1st Floor, 175 Collins Street, Hobart (GPO Box 66A, Hobart, 7001).
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Introduction

This bulletin presents statistics of Tasmanian employee injuries compiled from reports of workers' compensation claims for accidents and diseases occurring during 1989-90. The reports are supplied by insurance companies, self-insurers and State Government departments.

Employment injuries Until 1986-87 this publication was titled Industrial Accidents, Tasmania. The change to Employment Injuries, Tasmania has been made to reflect more accurately the content of the publication and the collection.

Accidents are generally thought of as sudden, unwanted and unforeseen occurrences. This publication also includes statistics on *diseases* which, though unwanted and unforeseen, often develop over a long period. These, together, are designated *employment injuries* because not only are occurrences at work collected (*occupational injuries*), but so are compensatable occurrences on the way to and from work (*journey cases*).

Variations in reporting The Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training, Labour and Industry Division, have worked closely with insurers to make sure the coverage and accuracy of the collection is as high as possible. Insurers generally have been co-operative, but there is no fool-proof way of checking whether reports have been received for all claims coming within the scope of the collection.

Differences in the numbers of reports received from year to year may be due as much to variations in coverage as to changes in accident experience. Care should therefore be taken when looking at trends in the numbers of accidents and diseases reported over time.

Value of statistics The main value of the statistics lies in the detailed analysis possible, demonstrated by the range of cross-classified variables available in tables in this publication. Employment injuries are classified by industry and occupation groups, agencies and types of accidents, type and bodily location of injuries, time and day of occurrence and so on.

Additional information Additional information is readily available for those tables for which only persons or general data are shown in this bulletin. A more detailed industry or occupation break-up is also available. In addition, other tables can be produced on request, using any of the data items supplied on the reporting form.

Scope of the Collection

Collection period The statistics represent employment injuries reported by insurers as occurring during 1989-90. Estimates have been made by insurers for those employment injuries which occurred during this time but were not finalised by the time the collection was closed off in March 1991.

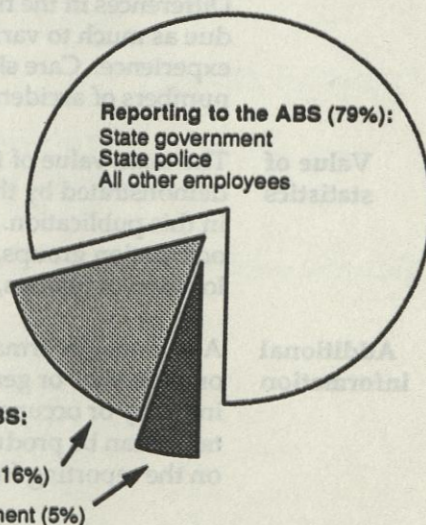
Who is included The statistics relate to persons covered under the *Tasmanian Workers' Compensation Act 1988* who have lost one complete day (or shift) or more, not counting any time lost on the day (or shift) of the occurrence.

Also included are police officers and State government employees. This means that about 79 per cent of the working population falls within the scope of the collection.

(The *coverage* is the extent to which the 79 per cent within the scope of the collection are represented in the collection.)

Workers not included in the collection consist of self-employed persons (about 16 per cent), and Commonwealth government employees (about five per cent).

Graph 1. Composition of total employment



Effect of exclusions The exclusion of self-employed persons is likely to have a marked effect on statistics for industries where self-employment is common; for example, construction, rural and transport industries.

Defence services and communications are industries which are not covered at all, and others have reduced coverage due to the exclusion of Commonwealth government employees.

Re-opened claims Only original claims are covered by the tables and graphs in this bulletin. During 1989-90 there were 148 re-opened claims reported. These added a further estimated \$579 355 to the cost of employee injuries.

This year in brief

The community is likely to be aware of the cost in human terms of deaths and injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents; these tend to be well reported on television, radio and in the press.

Road traffic accidents

While it is true that road accident fatalities outnumber industrial fatalities, there are many more people injured in the course of their work than on the road.

For every person reported injured in a traffic accident, there are six people reporting employment injuries.

Table 1. Road traffic accidents and employment injuries, 1989-90

	Road traffic accidents(a)		Employment injuries	
	Deaths	Injuries	Deaths	Injuries
Males	52	1 141	4	9 424
Females	19	764	1	2 113
Persons	71	1 905	5	11 537

(a) Source publication: *Road Traffic Accidents Involving Casualties, Tasmania, 1990*; ABS catalogue number 9406.6

Employment injury numbers

There were 11 542 employment injury claims reported as occurring during the 1989-90 financial year. This is an increase of 1401 over the 10 141 reported as occurring in 1988-89.

Reports of employment injuries to men increased by 12.1 per cent, from the 8409 reported in 1988-89 to 9428 in 1989-90. Reports involving women also continued to increase: 2114 for 1989-90 compared to 1732 in the previous year, an increase of 22.1 per cent.

Diseases

Of the 11 542 claims reported, 359 were identified as diseases while 11 183 related to accidents. Diseases accounted for about three per cent of all reports, a figure consistent with the pattern of previous years.

Deaths

In 1989-90, there were five deaths reported, four men and one woman. Compensation paid on these was an estimated \$192 451.

Extent of disability

In addition to the five deaths, there were a further five cases where the injured people were unable to resume work as a result of their injuries. These are described as *permanent total disability* cases.

These, and fatalities, because there is no resumption of work, are not used in the calculation of average time lost and average daily compensation figures.

There were also 31 cases where the people were able to resume work, but in a reduced capacity and with a subsequent loss of earnings, due to *permanent partial disabilities*.

Temporary disabilities accounted for the remaining 11 501 reports, over 99 per cent of all claims.

While generally considered to be less serious than the other three types of disabilities, temporary disabilities can nevertheless involve a considerable amount of time off work and medical treatment before the affected people can resume normal duties.

Compensation For the year, an estimated total of \$22.7m was paid in compensation for all original claims reported to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, an increase of \$3.1m over the amount estimated in 1988-89. This gives an average cost for each non-fatal claim of \$1955, and an average of \$96 for each day lost for temporary and permanent partial disability cases. In 1988-89 the average cost for each day lost was \$98.

The average cost for non-fatal claims involving men was \$1979, with a daily cost of \$105; for women it was \$1846 with a daily cost of \$69.

Table 2. Cost of claims by industry

	Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries		
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(a)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	978 222	1 620	74
Community services	4 391 127	2 897	96
Construction	2 277 661	2 065	96
Electricity, gas and water	727 211	1 544	87
Finance, property and business services	433 916	2 284	79
Forestry and logging	686 341	2 848	123
Manufacturing	6 231 162	1 630	97
Mining	1 664 917	3 635	240
Public administration	812 655	1 392	77
Recreational, personal and other services	759 133	1 615	73
Transport and storage	1 164 105	2 371	101
Wholesale and retail trade	2 427 359	1 530	81
Total persons	22 553 809	1 955	96
Males	18 652 444	1 979	105
Females	3 901 365	1 846	69

(a) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Time lost The cost of employment injuries can also be measured in terms of the time lost as a result of an accident or disease. This collection measures time lost in terms of calendar days: the total period between the time the person stopped work and the time he or she started work again, or was declared fit to start.

In 1989-90 a total of 230 423 days were lost, an average of 20 days for each claim. This was an increase over the previous year in which 181 315 days were lost, at an average of 18 days for each report.

The total time lost by men was 174 034 days, an average of 18 days per report, slightly up on the 17 days average reported in 1988-89. For women, time lost in total was 56 389 days, giving an average of 25 days compared with 20 the previous year.

Table 3. Time lost by Industry

Type of employment	Time lost for non-fatal injuries		
	Total time lost		Average per person
	Full-time	Part-time	F/t only
	(days)	(days)	(days)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	10 585	2 694	19
Community services	38 966	6 938	29
Construction	22 772	639	21
Electricity, gas and water	8 305	16	18
Finance, property and business services	3 478	1 383	20
Forestry and logging	5 055	528	21
Manufacturing	61 270	2 604	16
Mining	6 812	134	15
Public administration	10 277	255	18
Recreational, personal and other services	8 963	1 468	21
Transport and storage	10 933	637	23
Wholesale and retail trade	24 225	1 486	16
Total persons	211 641	18 782	19
Males	167 755	6 279	18
Females	43 886	12 503	25

Type of Employment

Type of Employment indicates whether the worker was employed full-time or part-time. Overall, 4.5 per cent of injuries occur to those reported as working part-time.

Table 4. Employment injuries by industry and type of employment

	Type of employment		
	Full-time	Part-time	Total
	(number)	(number)	(number)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	546	58	604
Community services	1 331	185	1 516
Construction	1 089	14	1 103
Electricity, gas and water	469	2	471
Finance, property and business services	172	18	190
Forestry and logging	237	4	241
Manufacturing	3 757	68	3 825
Mining	457	1	458
Public administration	568	16	584
Recreational, personal and other services	418	52	470
Transport and storage	483	8	491
Wholesale and retail trade	1 497	92	1 589
Total persons	11 024	518	11 542
Males	9 263	165	9 428
Females	1 761	353	2 114

Only 1.8 per cent of male employment injuries occurred to those who worked part-time, (about 8 per cent of employed males) compared with 16.7 per cent for females working part-time. For females, this represents a sizable increase from the figure of 9.2 per cent the previous year. The percentage of females who work on a part-time basis has remained at around 45 per cent for the last two years.

The industry with the highest incidence of part-time injuries as a percentage of all injuries, was *Community services* with 12.2 per cent. This was closely followed by *Recreational, personal and other services* with 11.1 per cent. These figures reflect the fact that there is a higher proportion of part-time workers in both *Community services* and *Recreational, personal and other services*, and a low proportion of part-time workers in the *Mining* industry.

Time of occurrence

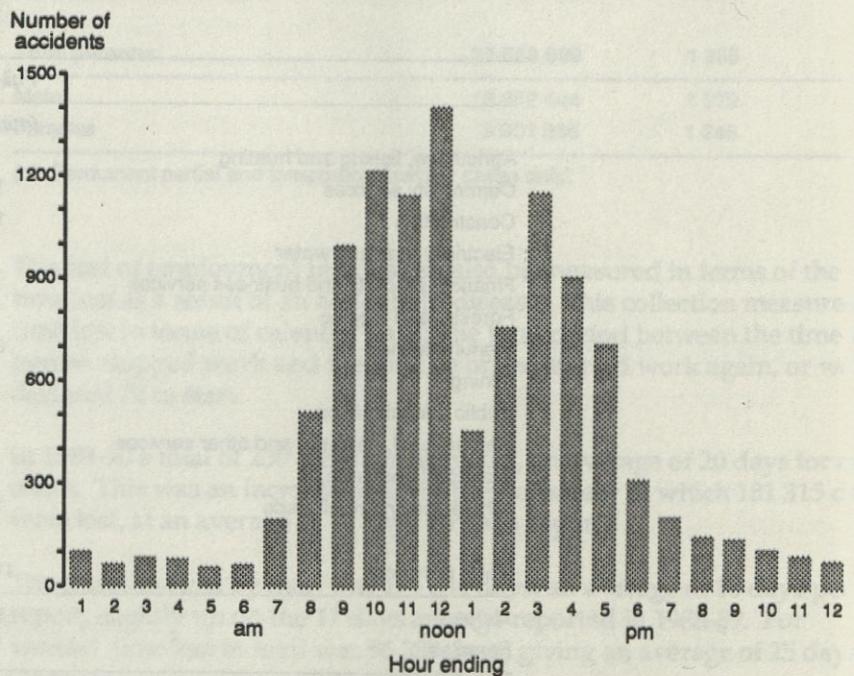
For most claims this information is readily available. In some cases, however, the actual time of the occurrence is not known. Many disease cases, for example, occur over a long period, the exact moment they start not being known. In other cases a trivial injury may develop into something more serious, the original injury having passed un-noticed.

Where the actual time is not known, the time the injury or disease was first noticed or first reported is asked for.

Graph 2 shows the distribution of employment injuries by time for 1989-90. Not surprisingly, few occur in the 'off-peak' hours; before 7 am or after 8 pm, and most occur in conventional working hours.

The most noticeable feature of the graph is the peak on either side of the conventional lunch hour. It is interesting to note that a third of all accidents occur within the three hours preceding midday.

Graph 2. Employment injuries by hour of occurrence



Historical trends

Numbers of employment injuries

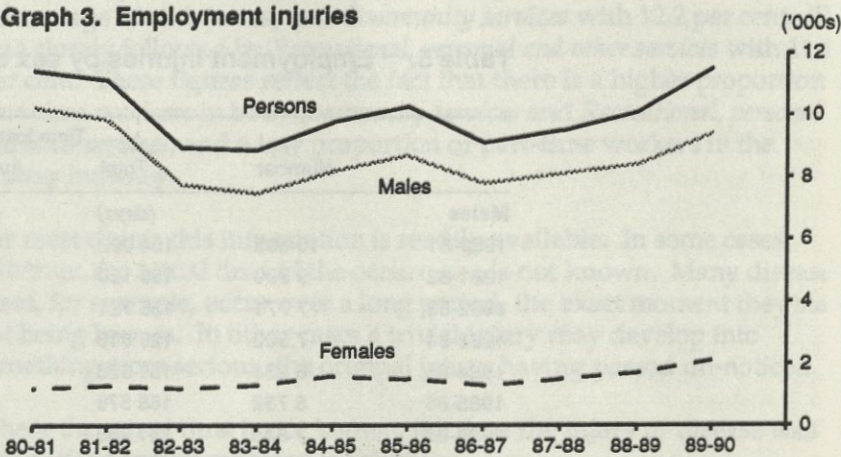
Over the period 1980-81 to 1989-90, the number of employment injuries reported has remained fairly close to 10 000 each financial year. Differences in numbers reported may be due as much to variations in coverage as to changes in accident experience, so care should be taken when looking for trends in the numbers reported over time.

Table 5. Employment injuries by sex and year

	Number	Time lost		Compensation	
		Total	Average	Total	Average
		(days)	(days)	(\$M)	(\$ per day)
Males					
1980-81	10 305	154 092	15	9.3	57
1981-82	9 890	156 120	16	12.4	69
1982-83	7 771	138 721	18	11.8	73
1983-84	7 502	129 810	17	10.7	71
1984-85	8 231	159 328	19	14.2	76
1985-86	8 732	168 579	19	13.7	79
1986-87	7 835	141 736	18	14.5	92
1987-88	8 072	132 460	16	15.2	109
1988-89	8 409	142 633	17	16.7	104
1989-90	9 428	174 034	18	18.8	105
Females					
1980-81	1 200	22 497	19	0.8	38
1981-82	1 309	30 077	23	1.7	46
1982-83	1 233	26 675	22	2.1	59
1983-84	1 286	23 110	18	1.5	56
1984-85	1 564	38 947	25	2.6	58
1985-86	1 543	44 831	29	3.1	59
1986-87	1 255	29 067	23	2.4	72
1987-88	1 458	21 123	14	1.8	83
1988-89	1 732	38 682	22	2.9	75
1989-90	2 114	56 389	27	3.9	69
Persons					
1980-81	11 505	176 589	15	10.2	55
1981-82	11 199	186 197	17	14.1	66
1982-83	9 004	165 396	18	13.9	70
1983-84	8 788	152 920	17	12.2	69
1984-85	9 795	198 275	20	16.8	72
1985-86	10 275	213 410	21	16.9	75
1986-87	9 090	170 803	19	16.9	89
1987-88	9 530	153 583	16	16.9	105
1988-89	10 141	181 315	18	19.6	98
1989-90	11 542	230 423	20	22.7	96

From Table 5 above, it can be seen that there is a trend towards growing numbers of women being injured in the workplace. In 1989-90 women accounted for 18.3 per cent of all accident reports, compared with 10.4 per cent in 1980-81. In 1980-81, for each woman reported injured, there were 8.6 men injured. This has increased steadily over the period, and at present the rate is one woman reported injured for every 4.5 men.

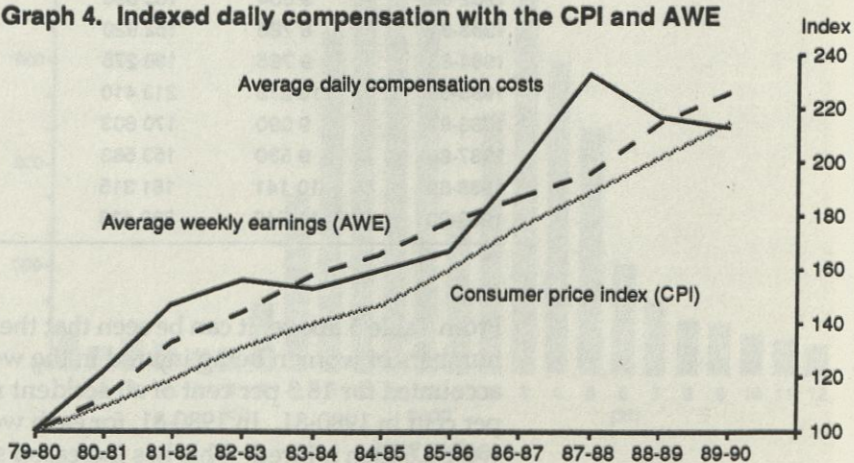
This increase is due in part to the fact that the number of women in the workforce has grown substantially over the last ten years. Since 1980-81, women's numbers have increased by 30.1 per cent; for men, the increase has been only 3.7 per cent. At present, women comprise 40.1 per cent of all employed persons.



Compensation

An indicator often used to measure inflation is the Consumer Price Index (CPI). An index of daily compensation costs has been calculated using 1979-80 = 100.0 as a base year. Because compensation payments involve a large wage component, an index of average weekly earnings (AWE) for Tasmania has also been calculated. These have been plotted against the CPI for Hobart (also using 1979-80 as a base year) in the graph below.

The graph shows that in general, there has been a close correlation between CPI, AWE and daily compensation costs, except for the period 1986-87 to 1987-88. After a sharp increase in average daily compensation in 1987-88, it has returned to be more in line with CPI and AWE levels.



Incidence rates

While there is value in knowing the number of employment injuries occurring within a particular industry, this value is considerably enhanced if one knows the number of people employed within the industry at the time.

Knowing the employed population allows the calculation of *incidence rates*, and thus meaningful comparisons can be made between industries.

Average employment

Table 6 below shows the average employment by sex and industry for 1989-90 obtained from the ABS's Labour Force Survey and Survey of Employment and Earnings. It should be remembered that the figures do not represent all those who are employed. Excluded from the figures below are Commonwealth government employees and self-employed persons as they are not within the scope of the collection.

Table 6. Average employment by industry and sex

	Males	Females	Persons
	('000s)	('000s)	('000s)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	5.0	1.3	6.3
Community services	13.5	25.5	39.0
Construction	6.1	0.7	6.8
Electricity, gas and water	3.5	0.4	3.9
Finance, property and business services	5.6	6.7	12.3
Forestry and logging	1.2	0.1	1.4
Manufacturing	22.1	5.6	27.7
Mining	2.8	0.2	3.0
Public administration	6.4	3.3	9.8
Recreational, personal and other services	4.3	7.8	12.1
Transport and storage	4.5	0.8	5.2
Wholesale and retail trade	15.6	13.3	28.8
Total(a)	90.6	65.8	156.5

(a) Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding.

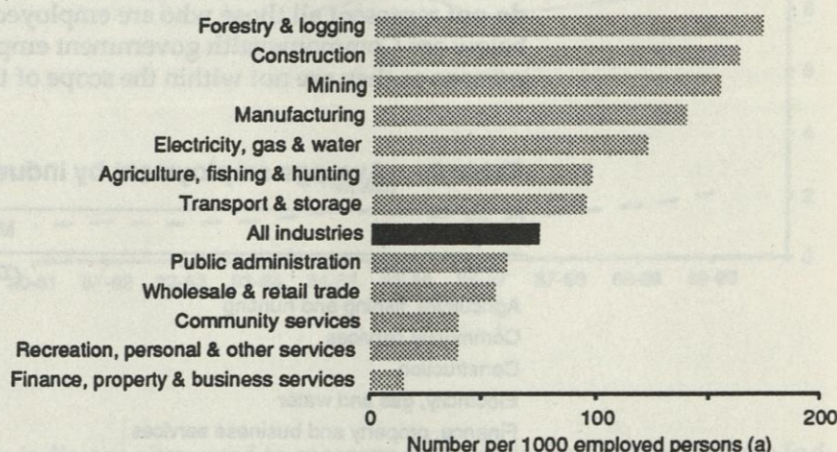
Table 7. Distribution of employment and employment injuries

	Employment	Accidents	Diseases
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	4.0	5.0	11.1
Community services	24.9	13.0	17.0
Construction	4.3	9.5	12.5
Electricity, gas and water	2.5	4.2	1.7
Finance, property and business services	7.9	1.6	3.6
Forestry and logging	0.9	2.1	1.7
Manufacturing	17.7	33.2	32.3
Mining	1.9	4.1	1.4
Public administration	6.3	5.1	4.7
Recreational, personal and other services	7.7	4.1	4.2
Transport and storage	3.3	4.4	1.1
Wholesale and retail trade	18.4	13.9	8.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Employment injuries distribution If all industries were equally hazardous in which to work, the distribution of employment injuries should match the distribution of the employed population working in them. Obviously some industries present more hazards than others. This can be seen in the preceding table (Table 7).

Mining, for example, employs 1.9 per cent of the collected population, but accounted for 4.1 per cent of reported employment injuries. *Finance, property and business services*, on the other hand, though employing a bigger proportion (7.9 per cent), reported only 1.6 per cent of accidents.

Graph 5. Employment Injury Incidence rates



(a) Excludes Commonwealth government and self-employed

Incidence rates From graph 5 it can be seen that the *Forestry and logging* industry group experienced more employment injuries (172) for every thousand people employed than did other industry groups. The average for all industries was 74 employment injuries per 1000, an increase from the 67 per 1000 reported in 1988-89.

Those sectors of Tasmanian industry at the lower end of the scale were the service industries. Lowest of all was *Finance, property and business services* (15 per 1000), followed by *Recreational, personal and other services* and *Community services*, both with 39 per 1000.

Some care should be taken in how these figures are interpreted. It should not be assumed, for example, that forestry workers or construction workers are more careless or accident prone than real estate agents. The hazards they face each day in the normal course of their work are more numerous, therefore the risk of experiencing employment injuries is much greater.

The incidence of diseases, although increasing slightly, remains very low in comparison with accidents. Only 1 out of 32 employment injuries is reported as a disease. (The actual rate is 2.3 per 1000, compared with 1.7 for 1988-89.)

As can be expected, men have a higher employment injury rate than women, 104 per 1000 men employed compared with 32 per 1000 for women.

This suggests that men are almost three times as likely to be injured at work than women. However, because men are more likely to be employed in the higher risk occupations, not surprisingly, their injury rate is higher.

Table 8. Incidence rates by industry and sex

	1988-89	1989-90		
	Persons (rate)	Persons (rate)	Males (rate)	Females (rate)
Agriculture, fishing, hunting	71	96	97	93
Community services	36	39	51	33
Construction	91	162	177	34
Electricity, gas and water	141	121	131	28
Finance, property and business services	10	15	19	13
Forestry and logging	115	172	198	40
Manufacturing	128	138	154	73
Mining	192	153	162	25
Public administration	55	60	81	19
Recreational, personal and other services	32	39	61	27
Transport and storage	95	94	106	18
Wholesale and retail trade	41	55	80	25
Total	67	74	104	32
Accidents	65	71	101	30
Diseases	1.7	2.3	2.6	1.9

In general, the pattern as shown in Table 8, has remained consistent over the three years that incidence rates have been calculated.

Since 1986-87, the highest rate of injury incidence had consistently been in the *Mining* industry. However, this rate has been decreasing each year, from a high of 278 injuries per 1000 employed in 1986-87, the first year of calculation, to the current rate of 153.

At present *Forestry and logging* has the highest incident rate of injury (172 per 1000) and *Finance, property and business services*, the lowest with 15 per 1000.

The greatest increase in rate over the period 1988-89 to 1989-90 was experienced in *Construction* (78 per cent), the greatest decrease was the 20 per cent reduction in incidence for *Mining*.

In general, the industries with the greatest variability of rates have comparatively low employment levels with the result that small movements tend to be exaggerated.

Industrial diseases

Employment injury reports sent to the Australian Bureau of Statistics contain descriptions of the events leading to the report. *Nature of injury* codes are given on the basis of these descriptions.

Disease coding If a recognised medical condition is described, a code from the *International Classification of Diseases (9th Revision)* (ICD) can be given. Around two to three per cent of all reports each year fall into this category.

Undoubtedly, the number of disease conditions that occur each year is understated. It is quite possible, for example, for a condition such as *bursitis* to be reported simply as a 'strain'. It would then miss out on being coded as a disease.

In 1989-90 there were 359 reports given ICD classifications, 3.1 per cent of the total of 11 542 received. This was an increase of 42 per cent over the 252 reported in 1988-89 (2.5 per cent of all reports for that year). However, because of the low proportion of diseases reported each year, the movements from year to year tend to be exaggerated.

While in many cases the distinction between accidents and diseases is blurred, it is nevertheless useful to examine the occurrences commonly classified as diseases.

Table 9. Types of reported diseases

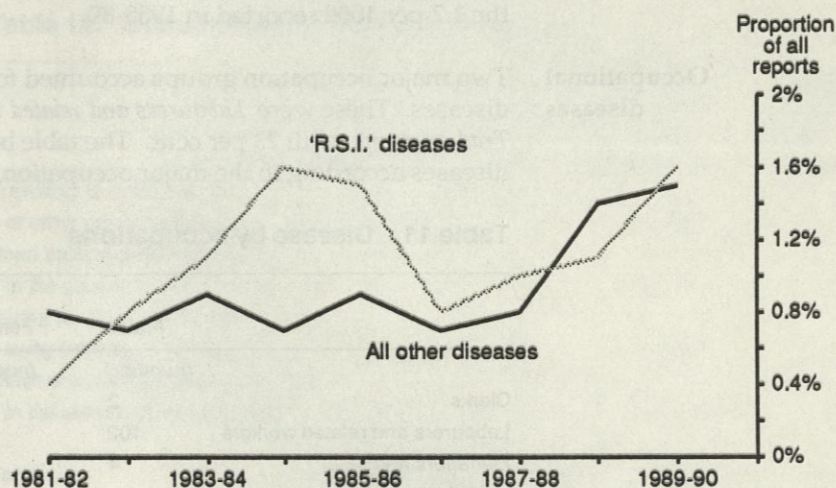
	Number	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)
ICD 133: <i>Acariasis</i> (Scabies, mites, etc.)	11	3	380
ICD 354: <i>Mononeuritis of upper limb and mononeuritis multiplex</i> (Carpal tunnel syndrome, etc.)	9	58	6 810
ICD 360-379: <i>Disorders of the eye and adnexa</i>	12	3	367
ICD 460-519: <i>Diseases of the respiratory system</i>	12	14	2 418
ICD 692: <i>Contact dermatitis and other eczema</i>	84	15	2 350
ICD 726: <i>Peripheral enthesopathies and allied syndromes</i> (Bursitis, rotator cuff syndrome, etc.)	31	16	1 008
ICD 727: <i>Other disorders of synovium, tendon and bursa</i> (Synovitis, tenosynovitis, etc.)	141	43	3 022
Other reported disease conditions	59	49	4 255
Total persons	359	32	2 799
Males	237	23	2 720
Females	122	49	2 952

By far the most prevalent conditions in 1989-90 were those resulting from occupational over-use or repetitive movement. These appear in the table above as ICD 354, ICD 726 and ICD 727 and comprise the *repetitive strain injury* (R.S.I.) or *occupational overuse syndrome* (O.O.S.) group of conditions. They accounted for 50 per cent of the diseases reported.

Disease trends Diseases, with the exception of the so-called 'R.S.I.' or 'O.O.S' group mentioned above, have remained at a stable level, except for the last two years when an increase to 1.5 per cent has been measured.

The 'R.S.I.' types experienced a dramatic increase in incidence between 1980 and 1986, peaking to 1.6 per cent of all reports in 1984-85, before dropping to be more in line with the incidence of 'other' diseases. Currently both the 'R.S.I.' type diseases and 'other' diseases appear to be at around the same level of incidence in the workplace.

Graph 6. Incidence of 'R.S.I.' and other disease conditions



Diseases in industry Table 10 shows that the greatest number of diseases was reported in *Manufacturing* industries. This group consistently accounts for around one third of all diseases that have occurred in the workplace, a figure which is fairly consistent with employment levels.

Table 10. Number of diseases reported by Industry

	1988-89	1989-90		
	Persons	Persons	Males	Females
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	33	40	23	17
Community services	36	61	18	43
Construction	11	45	44	1
Electricity, gas and water	11	6	6	-
Finance, property and business services	-	13	3	10
Forestry and logging	5	6	6	-
Manufacturing	90	116	88	28
Mining	10	5	5	-
Public administration	8	17	11	6
Recreational, personal and other services	10	15	7	8
Transport and storage	2	4	4	-
Wholesale and retail trade	36	31	22	9
Total	252	359	237	122

Because the number of diseases reported by industry each year is very small, specially when compared with the population employed in those industries, it is difficult to calculate meaningful incidence rates. It would appear that *Construction* had the highest rate with 6.6 cases for every 1000 people employed, closely followed by *Agriculture, fishing and hunting* with 6.3 per 1000. Following that are *Forestry and logging* with 4.3 per cent and *Manufacturing* with 4.2 per cent.

The industry group with the lowest rate was *Transport and storage* with only 0.8 reports per 1000 employed.

The overall rate for diseases in 1989-90 was 2.3 per 1000, an increase over the 1.7 per 1000 reported in 1988-89.

Occupational diseases

Two major occupation groups accounted for 65 per cent of all reported diseases. These were *Labourers and related workers* with 42 per cent and *Tradespersons* with 23 per cent. The table below shows the distribution of diseases according to the major occupation groups.

Table 11. Disease by occupations

	Males (number)	Females (number)	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)
Clerks	2	17	65	3 774
Labourers and related workers	102	47	27	2 054
Managers and administrators	4	1	50	3 769
Para-professionals	3	11	13	698
Personal service and sales	-	23	45	2 328
Plant and machine operators	43	15	36	3 490
Professionals	5	5	57	4 030
Tradespersons	78	3	27	3 729
All reported diseases	237	122	32	2 799
All employment injuries	9 428	2 114	20	1 955

Because of the small numbers of diseases reported, average leave figures fluctuate from year to year. In 1989-90, the occupation groups with the longest average time off work as a result of their conditions were *Clerks* with 65 days and *Professionals* with an average of 57 days per claim.

These were both considerably more than the average of 32 days per claim for all diseases, or the average for all employment injuries of 20 days per claim.

Not surprisingly the average cost for claims was higher than for accidents; \$2799 for diseases compared to \$1955 for accidents.

General employment injuries statistics

In the summary of the year's statistics in this publication a comparison was drawn between road traffic accidents and employment injuries.

Occurrence of injuries

In fact, there is some overlap between the two sets of statistics. Of the 11 542 employment injuries reported, 214 were described as vehicle accidents. Road traffic accidents occurring in the course of employment accounted for 33 of these. The majority (140) of the rest happened on the way to or from work.

Table 12. Occurrence of employment injuries

	Number (number)	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)	Vehicle accidents (number)
Travelling to or from work or other prescribed journey	447	28	1 329	140
Road traffic accident occurring in the course of employment	82	48	9 631	33
During meal or other work break, or away from work during a recess	193	11	969	8
Other occurrences arising out of, or in the course of, employment	10 820	20	1 941	33
Total	11 542	20	1 955	214

Occurrences on the way to and from work do not have to be vehicle accidents. Many people injure themselves through, for example, accidental falls and trips.

Table 13. Nature of injuries

	Males (number)	Females (number)	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)
Burns	577	72	8	740
Concussion and other head injuries	43	23	19	1 089
Contusions and crushings	1 582	390	13	1 432
Dislocations, sprains and strains	3 807	1 090	23	2 118
Fractures	499	78	57	5 710
Open wounds	1 764	263	13	1 265
Poisonings	68	9	8	1 756
Superficial injuries	717	46	5	729
Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries	134	21	63	8 285
Reported diseases	237	122	32	2 799
Total	9 428	2 114	20	1 955

Nature of injuries

Table 12 shows that accidents involving travelling to or from work, and road traffic accidents occurring in the course of employment, involve more time lost than other occurrences. In part, this is due to the tendency for injuries to be more extensive in these types of accidents.

This is supported by data in Table 13. Injuries such as *Fractures* with an average of 57 days, and *Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries* with an average of 63 days, are consistent with vehicle accidents and involve far more time lost than the 20 days average for all injury types.

By far the most common injuries, however, are *Dislocations, sprains and strains*, with 42 per cent of all reports. Table 14 shows approximately half of these occurring to the trunk.

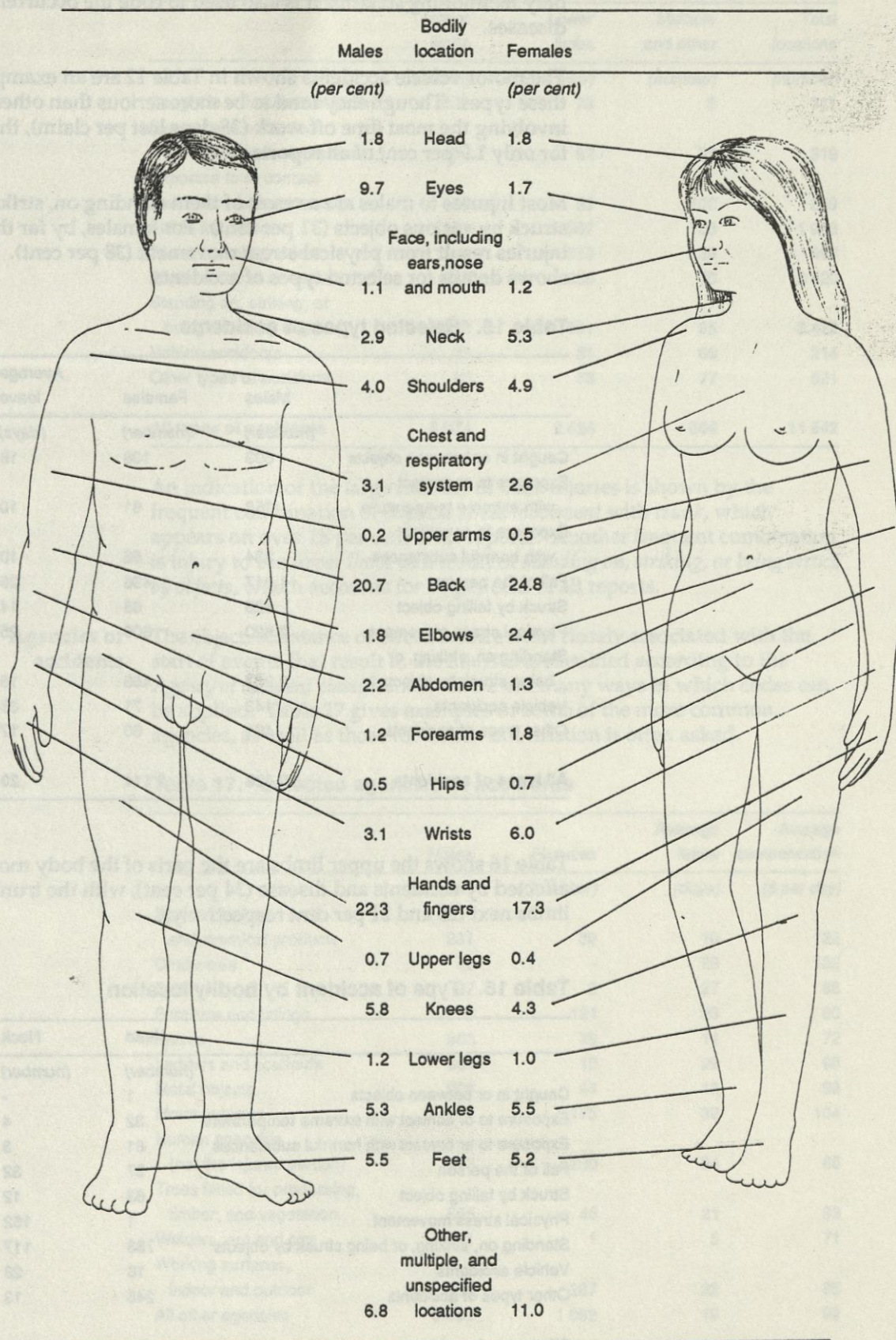
Table 14. Nature of injury by bodily location

	Head (number)	Neck (number)	Trunk (number)
Burns	302	6	15
Concussion, and other head injuries	66	-	-
Contusions and crushings	60	20	264
Dislocations, sprains and strains	1	334	2 440
Fractures	23	1	84
Open wounds	169	1	7
Poisonings	2	2	1
Superficial injuries	604	3	6
Other, multiple, and unspecified injuries	6	-	79
Reported diseases	26	4	17
Total	1 259	371	2 913
Males	1 165	263	2 341
Females	94	108	572

Table 14. Nature of injury by bodily location (continued)

	Upper limbs (number)	Lower limbs (number)	Multiple and other (number)	Total locations (number)
Burns	184	106	36	649
Concussion and other head injuries	-	-	-	66
Contusions and crushings	786	694	148	1 972
Dislocations, sprains and strains	909	1 060	153	4 897
Fractures	257	194	18	577
Open wounds	1 513	276	61	2 027
Poisonings	4	4	64	77
Superficial injuries	100	43	7	763
Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries	3	-	67	155
Reported diseases	215	47	50	359
Total	3 971	2 424	604	11 542
Males	3 212	2 022	425	9 428
Females	759	402	179	2 114

Diagram1. Distribution of employment injuries by bodily location



Types of accidents *Type of accident* is the way in which a person becomes injured. Though only mentioning *accidents* it is also used to code the occurrence of diseases.

The motor vehicle accidents shown in Table 12 are an example of one of these types. Though they tend to be more serious than other accidents, involving the most time off work (38 days lost per claim), they account for only 1.9 per cent of all reports.

Most injuries to males are a result of them standing on, striking, or being struck by various objects (31 per cent). For females, by far the most injuries result from physical stress movement (38 per cent). Table 15 shows details for selected types of accidents.

Table 15. Selected types of accidents

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Caught in or between objects	603	108	18	90
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	258	61	10	91
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	234	55	10	117
Fall of the person	1 517	436	25	93
Struck by falling object	625	68	14	99
Physical stress movement	2 620	800	25	88
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	2 967	455	15	105
Vehicle accidents	143	71	38	72
Other types of accidents	461	60	17	153
All types of accidents	9 428	2 114	20	96

Table 16 shows the upper limbs are the parts of the body most often affected by accidents and disease (34 per cent), with the trunk and lower limbs next (25 and 21 per cent respectively).

Table 16. Type of accident by bodily location

	Head	Neck	Trunk
	(number)	(number)	(number)
Caught in or between objects	1	-	14
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	32	4	14
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	81	3	4
Fall of the person	37	32	470
Struck by falling object	63	12	38
Physical stress movement	1	162	2 134
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	783	117	168
Vehicle accidents	16	28	38
Other types of accidents	245	13	33
All types of accidents	1 259	371	2 913

Table 16. Type of accident by bodily location (continued)

	Upper limbs	Lower limbs	Multiple and other	Total locations
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(number)
Caught in or between objects	620	73	3	711
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	153	92	24	319
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	76	23	102	289
Fall of the person	301	987	126	1 953
Struck by falling object	223	318	39	693
Physical stress movement	817	236	70	3 420
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	1 668	591	95	3 422
Vehicle accidents	33	31	68	214
Other types of accidents	80	73	77	521
All types of accidents	3 971	2 424	604	11 542

An indication of the large number of back injuries is shown by the frequent combination of *physical stress movement* with *trunk*, which appears on over 18 per cent of all reports. Another frequent combination is injury to the *upper limbs* as a result of *standing on, striking, or being struck by objects*, which accounts for 14 per cent of all reports.

Agencies of accidents

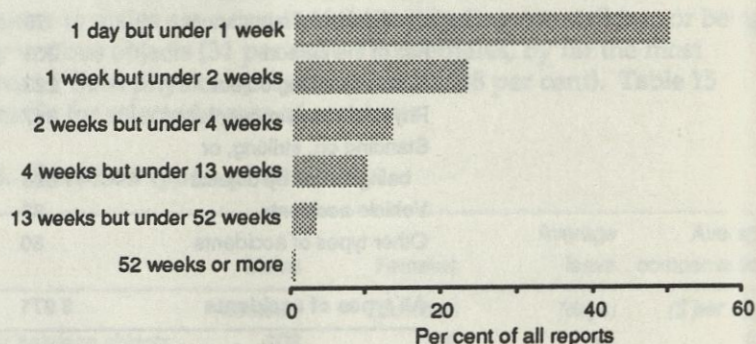
The object, substance or circumstance most closely associated with the start of events that result in the injuries is classified according to the *Agency of accident classification*. There are many ways in which codes can be applied. Table 17 gives examples of some of the more common agencies, as well as those for which information is often asked.

Table 17. Selected agencies of accidents

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Basic chemicals and chemical products	231	39	10	122
Chainsaws	42	-	29	132
Forklifts	87	2	27	88
Furniture and fittings	200	121	28	80
Knives	363	78	11	72
Ladders and scaffolds	304	19	29	98
Metal objects	908	44	16	99
Motor vehicles	607	175	32	104
Human agencies (not the injured person)	113	230	34	85
Trees felled for processing, timber; and vegetation	655	46	21	88
Welders, arc and oxy	281	1	5	71
Working surfaces, indoor and outdoor	556	267	22	85
All other agencies	5 081	1 092	19	99
All agencies of accidents	9 428	2 114	20	96

Duration of leave Though many people are injured quite severely at work, and are away for long periods with high amounts of compensation being paid, it is significant that over half the reports show a time loss of less than a week. Because only claims involving a time loss of one day or more are reported, the figures understate the number of employment injuries with a time loss of less than a week.

Graph 7. Duration of leave



A rule of thumb used throughout the industry is that there are as many injuries involving less than a day as there are one day or more. Because there are about 10 000 of the latter reported each year, it means that around 20 000 employment injuries occur in total each year.

Table 18. Leave shorter and longer than one week (a)

	Males	Females	Total leave	Total compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$)
1 day but under 1 week	4 746	1 006	18 285	3 041 350
1 week or more	4 673	1 107	212 138	19 062 459
Total	9 419	2 113	230 423	22 103 809

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

Table 19. Duration of leave (a)

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
1 day but under 1 week	4 746	1 006	3	166
1 week but under 2 weeks	2 212	458	9	94
2 weeks but under 4 weeks	1 213	305	19	94
4 weeks but under 6 weeks	428	90	33	97
6 weeks but under 8 weeks	241	44	47	88
8 weeks but under 13 weeks	250	87	70	100
13 weeks but under 26 weeks	187	47	124	102
26 weeks but under 52 weeks	96	47	250	85
52 weeks or more	46	29	515	71
Total	9 428	2 114	20	96

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

Table 18 shows that although injuries involving less than a week appear on over half the reports, they account for only 8 per cent of the time lost and 14 per cent of the compensation paid. Of interest is the fact that Table 19 shows daily compensation is highest for these accidents and lowest for those with the longest duration of leave.

Selected industries

Tables elsewhere in this publication showing statistics for industry groups are, of necessity, fairly general. Table 20 gives statistics for industries about which information is often sought. The table shows that some specific industries experience quite costly claims; for example *Mining* with an average of \$240 per day, and *Forestry and logging* with an average of \$123 per day.

Of the selected industries, the *Retail and wholesale trade* industries along with *Recreational, personal and other services* appear to have relatively minor employment injuries, with less than average days away from work and less than average daily compensation.

Information on specific industries not included in the table can be made available on request to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Table 20. Selected Industries

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Agriculture and services to agriculture	430	110	23	73
Community services	682	834	30	96
- hospitals and nursing homes	205	569	29	97
Forestry and logging	237	4	23	123
Manufacturing of				
- food, beverages and tobacco	766	207	12	87
- textiles, clothing and footwear	83	120	22	75
- wood, wood products and furniture	287	15	17	81
- paper and paper products	224	4	16	105
- basic and fabricated metal products	1 041	20	17	121
- miscellaneous manufacturing	233	18	26	91
Mining	453	5	15	240
Public administration	521	63	18	77
- local government	484	31	15	84
Recreational, personal and other services	263	207	22	73
- restaurants, hotels and accommodation	100	116	14	66
Retail trade	571	269	15	72
- grocers, confectioners and tobacconists	114	151	14	45
Wholesale trade	684	65	17	90
- building and hardware	260	10	14	89
All other industries	2 953	173	20	92
Total, all Industries	9 428	2 114	20	96

Injuries by age

Most injuries that are reported occur to workers in the 20-34 years age group. While comprising only 38.7 per cent of the workforce, they accounted for almost half (49.5 per cent) of all employment injuries. However, while younger people experience more injuries in proportion to their representation in the workforce than older people, they also have less costly accidents.

This may be due in part to their having lower wages and salaries, but could also be a result of their injuries being generally less serious. This is supported by their shorter periods away from work in comparison with the overall average (20 days), and that of older age groups (approx 30 days for ages 45 years and over).

Table 21. Employment injuries by age groups

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Under 20 years	1 263	293	13	65
20 to 24 years	1 783	368	14	85
25 to 34 years	2 970	525	18	99
35 to 44 years	1 786	483	24	113
45 to 54 years	972	323	30	90
55 to 64 years	535	90	33	100
65 years and over	11	-	27	126
Age not stated	108	32	23	92
Total	9 428	2 114	20	96

Occupational injuries

As can be seen in Table 22, *Plant and machine operators* experience the highest average daily compensation payouts, \$117 per day, with *Professionals* and *Tradespersons* following with \$104 and \$100 respectively. All other occupation groups are below the average (\$96 per day) with *Clerks* the lowest, with only \$58 per day.

Table 22. Cost of claims by occupation groups

Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries			
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(a)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Clerks	430 804	1 932	58
Labourers and related workers	7 912 615	1 850	90
Managers and administrators	762 563	3 992	85
Para-professionals	1 388 112	3 386	95
Personal service and sales	929 073	1 309	72
Plant and machine operators	5 438 474	2 479	117
Professionals	722 649	3 613	104
Tradespersons	4 969 519	1 491	100
Total persons	22 553 809	1 955	96

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases

Professionals and Para-professionals have the longest periods off work with 35 and 36 days on average. Tradespersons have the shortest time away from work (15 days).

Table 23. Time lost by occupation groups

	Males	Females	Total	Average
	(number)	(number)	leave(a)	leave(a)
			(days)	(days)
Clerks	67	156	7 435	33
Labourers and related workers	3 522	755	87 153	20
Managers and administrators	167	25	6 007	32
Para-professionals	211	199	14 564	36
Personal service and sales	212	498	12 970	18
Plant and machine operators	1 936	259	46 390	21
Professionals	110	90	6 929	35
Tradespersons	3 203	132	48 975	15
Total	9 428	2 114	230 423	20

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

National Data Set Statistics

Employment injuries statistics for the whole of Australia are hard to come by, mainly because there is no national collection as such. Each State's collection is controlled by its own legislation, with resulting differences between States in scope, definitions and other aspects of the collection.

Worksafe Australia

Worksafe Australia is a Commonwealth organisation involved in occupational health and safety matters, and is charged with the task of trying to produce National statistics. In doing this it has to compile elements common to all the States' collections to assemble a *National Data Set*.

The following tables for 1989-90 are constructed to meet National Data Set requirements. Because Tasmanian statistics are already very close to those required for the National Data Set, there are only a few modifications needed.

The two main differences between these and other tables in this publication are:

- National tables include only those reports involving a time loss of one week or more.
- *Journey cases* (occurrences on the way to and from work) are excluded, as are *Recess cases* (occurrences during recesses or work breaks).

Table 18 presented earlier shows that the effect of these exclusions is to cut by about half the number of reportable injuries.

Table 24. Cost of claims by major industry groups, Tasmania(a)

	Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries		
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(b)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	878 214	2 531	73
Forestry and logging	631 093	4 675	122
Mining	1 415 123	5 800	232
Manufacturing	5 193 273	2 985	95
Electricity, gas and water	620 840	2 861	91
Construction	1 959 980	3 813	96
Wholesale and retail trade	2 123 881	2 942	81
Transport and storage	1 022 628	3 933	97
Finance, property and business services	377 462	3 701	76
Public administration	653 887	2 413	77
Community services	3 369 681	4 786	84
Recreational, personal and other services	612 157	2 757	68
Total persons	18 858 219	3 443	93
Males	15 566 402	3 468	100
Females	3 291 817	3 325	69

(a) Journey cases excluded. Cases involving a time loss of one week or more.

(b) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Table 25. Time lost by major industry groups, Tasmania(a)

	Males	Females	Total leave(b)	Average leave(b)
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(days)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	280	67	12 094	35
Forestry and logging	133	2	5 156	38
Mining	243	1	6 099	25
Manufacturing	1 556	185	54 117	31
Electricity, gas and water	212	5	6 823	31
Construction	505	9	20 144	39
Wholesale and retail trade	569	155	21 925	30
Transport and storage	254	6	10 517	40
Finance, property & business services	59	43	4 282	42
Public administration	242	29	8 458	31
Community services	307	397	40 194	57
Recreational, personal and other services	131	91	8 950	40
Total	4 491	990	198 759	36

See footnotes at the bottom of the page.

Table 26. Cost of claims by major occupation groups, Tasmania(a)

Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries

	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(b)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Managers and administrators	713 143	5 845	87
Professionals	615 406	6 216	106
Para-professionals	1 208 037	6 358	98
Tradespersons	3 631 845	2 587	87
Clerks	316 222	3 593	64
Personal service and sales	758 124	2 369	73
Plant and machine operators	4 692 996	4 131	114
Labourers and related workers	6 922 446	3 267	87
Total persons	18 858 219	3 443	93

See footnotes at the bottom of the page.

Table 27. Time lost by major occupation groups, Tasmania(a)

	Males	Females	Total leave(b)	Average leave(b)
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(days)
Managers and administrators	108	15	5 344	44
Professionals	58	41	5 808	59
Para-professionals	97	93	12 278	65
Tradespersons	1 350	55	40 810	29
Clerks	27	61	4 904	56
Personal service and sales	91	229	10 402	33
Plant and machine operators	1 019	117	41 032	36
Labourers and related workers	1 741	379	78 181	37
Total	4 491	990	198 759	36

(a) Journey cases excluded. Cases involving a time loss of one week or more.

(b) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Definitions and other information

The following definitions have been adopted for this collection:

Employment injury: An *employment injury* results in a compensatable claim under the Workers' Compensation Act 1988, and has the following characteristics:

- The employment injury arises out of a work-related event.
- It leads to a loss of time of one complete day (or shift) or more, not counting any time lost on the day (or shift) of the occurrence.
- It results in either a temporary or permanent total incapacity, or death.
- It involves a claim for payment.

Type of accident: The *type of accident* is currently defined as the manner of contact of the injured person with the object or substance, or the exposure or movement of the injured person which resulted in the injury or disease.

In some cases the choice between the above alternatives results in conflict; e.g. a worker falls from a ladder and grabs a hot pipe to prevent fall. In the first alternative this would relate to the hot pipe. In the second it would refer to the fall from a height. In such situations the type of accident is selected according to which event caused the more severe injury.

The type of accident is classified according to the *Type of Accident Classification*.

Agency of accident: The *agency of accident* is currently defined as the object, substance or action most closely associated with the start of the events that led to the injury or disease and which in general could have been guarded against or corrected.

A distinction should be made between the *agency of injury* and *agency of accident*; for example, a fire damp explosion results in a miner being crushed by a beam. The agency of the accident is the material responsible for the fire damp explosion, while the agency of the injury is the beam itself.

The agency of accident is classified according to *Agency of Accident Classification*.

Cost of claims: The *cost of claims* consists of all compensation for claims reported during the financial year including the following:

- wages lost;
- hospital and medical expenses;
- legal costs (excluding common law claims); and
- lump sum settlements.

Where final details are unavailable, insurers are asked to provide estimates. This is most likely to occur in those cases involving fatalities or serious injuries. Care must therefore be taken before drawing conclusions based on variations in cost of claims patterns.

Time lost: The *time lost* is the period of time between the date ceased work due to the employment injury and the date work was resumed or the person was declared fit to resume work.

This is not necessarily the paid time lost. It includes paid days off but may also include weekends, holidays or periods for which compensation was not paid. An injured person may not necessarily be prevented from working in a second job during this period.

In the case where several periods of absence are involved it is the sum of those periods.

Date and time of employment injury: The *employment injury date* is the date the accident or disease was reported to have occurred. Similarly, the *time of employment injury* is the time of day the accident or disease was reported to have occurred.

In some cases, especially with diseases and conditions that develop slowly over a period of time, the actual time or date of the occurrence may not be known. In these the date and time the condition was first noticed or reported is accepted.

Time of employment injury was, collected for the first time in 1987-88.

Extent of disability: The *extent of disability* is the degree to which a person is affected as a result of an employment injury, and is classified according to one of four outcomes as described below.

- A *temporary disability* is one where the person affected is able to resume work in his normal occupation after recovering.
- A *permanent partial disability* is one where, as a result of the employment injury, a person is both prevented from returning to his or her normal occupation and incurs a loss of earnings.
- A *permanent total disability* is where the employment injury renders the affected person totally and permanently unfit for any type of work
- A *death* is recorded if it is directly attributable to the injuries sustained.

Industry: The predominant *industry* undertaken at the location at which the employment injury occurred is classified according to the *Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC), 1983 edition*.

Occupation: The normal *occupation* of the affected person is classified according to the *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO), 1987 edition*. Prior to 1987-88 occupation was coded according to the *Classification and Classified List of Occupations (CCLO)*. Whilst not strictly comparable with years prior to 1987-88, it is still possible to produce time-series data for some specific occupations.

Type of employment: *Type of employment* was introduced for the first time in 1987-88. It is used to find out whether the injured person worked full time or part time, and is defined as follows:

- *Full-time employees* are those (permanent, temporary or casual) who normally work for the full agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation; or, if no agreed or award hours apply, for 35 hours or more a week.
- *Part-time employees* are all those not included in the definition above.

Original claim: *Original claims* are cases which involve the first claim against an insurer for compensation for an employment injury.

Re-opened claim: *Re-opened claims* are those which had been closed previously but for which further incapacity or medical treatment has been accepted by the insurer as being attributable to the original employment injury.

Incidence rate: The *incidence rate* is the number of accidents or diseases reported per 1000 employed persons, adjusted to exclude from those employed persons self-employed persons and Commonwealth government employees. Both these groups are not within the scope of the collection.

Related ABS publications: • *Employment Injuries, Queensland* (6301.3), annual

All publications produced by the ABS are listed in the annual *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0). This is available at a cost of \$4.00 from any ABS office.

Standard symbols: The following standard symbols are used in this publication:

n.a not available for separate publication
 but included in totals where applicable.

- nil or less than half the unit shown.



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